

VZCZCXRO7378  
OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR  
DE RUEHLI #0607 3380656  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 040656Z DEC 09  
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7998  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 000607

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

EUR/RPM FOR RAPHAEL CARLAND AND AARON COPE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/03/2019  
TAGS: [EZ](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [PO](#)  
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE NATIONAL GUARD POISED TO DEPLOY  
TRAINERS TO ISAF

REF: LISBON 513

Classified By: Poleconoff Mario Fernandez,  
reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C/NF) Summary: Portuguese Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Alves, Head of Strategic Planning and International Affairs at the Guarda Nacional Republicana (GNR), Portugal's National Guard equivalent, told us December 3 that the Portuguese government had made a decision to deploy a GNR contingent of trainers to ISAF and would be making an official offer at the Force Generation Conference in Belgium, December 7. The exact number of trainers or the nature of their mission had yet to be determined. Whereas the GNR had contemplated deploying 10 trainers to the Mazar-e-Sharif Training Center, the Portuguese Ministry of Defense had suggested, following President Obama's speech December 1, that the GNR contribute a Police Operational Mentoring Liasion Team, consisting of 25 trainers, to be deployed in Afghanistan as necessary. The decision to deploy GNR trainers follows a long internal deliberation that reportedly included approval by the President. While it is somewhat troubling that the GOP has yet to nail down its GNR contribution to ISAF four days before the Force Generation Conference, and though its contribution likely will be modest, the decision to deploy trainers signals Portugal's strong commitment to NATO's efforts in Afghanistan. End Summary.

12. (C/NF) According to Alves, senior GNR staff had been trying since early 2009 to persuade officials at the Interior Ministry, to which the GNR reports, to deploy GNR trainers to ISAF as part of the European Gendarmerie Force (EGF). The decision was delayed, however, by the Portuguese Parliamentary Elections in September, and the resulting shuffle of ministers. Following a multilateral EGF fact-finding mission to Afghanistan in October -- led, incidentally, by a Portuguese GNR officer -- the GNR submitted a proposal to the Interior Minister to deploy 20 GNR officers to the Mazar-e-Sharif Training Center. Interior Minister Rui Pereira punted, declaring that the decision was too important to be made by a lame duck minister. When Pereira was reappointed in October, he bounced the proposal up to the Prime Minister, who reportedly consulted with the President because of the issue's "sensitivity." (Note: The PM and President are from the two main political parties, not the same party.)

13. (C/NF) While the GOP has reached a decision twvQ={I5qsident." The PM hoped to increase the number to 20 at a later date, once an initial deployment of GNR trainers was firmly in place. The President agreed. Alves reports, however, that in the wake of President Obama's speech December 1, Ministry of Defense officials proposed that the GNR contribute an entire Police Operational

Mentoring Liaison Team, of 25 trainers, to be deployed in Afghanistan as necessary. The GOP will be sorting this out in the next few days but, Alves underscored, the GNR is prepared to go either route -- or both routes, an option also under consideration. Deployment could take place as early as late January.

¶4. (C/NF) Comment: The long, deliberative process is part and parcel of the GOP's decision making. The process delays decisions -- in some cases decisions are overtaken by events -- but ensures that consensus is reached. While it is interesting that the GOP has yet to nail down its GNR contribution to ISAF four days before the Force Generation Conference, and though its contribution likely will be modest, the GOP decision to deploy trainers is a welcome and tangible symbol of Portugal's strong commitment to NATO's efforts in Afghanistan.

For more reporting from Embassy Lisbon and information about Portugal, please see our Intelink site:

<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/portal:portugal>  
BALLARD